MARVEL

MARK WAID
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MATTHEW WILSON

CAPTAIN AMERICA #700

PLUS:
AN ALL-NEW CLASSIC TALE BY MARK WAID AND JACK KIRBY!

NEW AMERICA.
DAY 72.

HE NEVER WANTED THE JOB, YOU KNOW.

OF COURSE HE DIDN'T. THE ENTIRE NOTION OF THIS COUNTRY HAVING A *SOVEREIGN RULER* IS *POISON* TO THE STEVE ROGERS ETHOS.

ONE DOES NOT REBUILD A REPUBLIC OVERNIGHT, HOWEVER. IT'S A LONG PROCESS, PARTICULARLY WITH AMERICA BEING ONE-TENTH OF WHAT IT ONCE WAS, IF *THAT.*

YOU CAN'T JUST SLAPDASH A 250-YEAR-OLD CONSTITUTION WRITTEN BY A BUNCH OF WEALTHY WHITE LANDOWNERS ONTO A POST-RAMPART, POST-BABBINGTON *HELLSCAPE.*

SOMEONE HAD TO STEP UP AND TAKE THE REINS. THE REIGN.

HENCE OUR NEW ELECTED OFFICIAL, "*KING ROGERS.*"

HE HATES BEING CALLED THAT.

NO MATTER.

IT'S TIME HE SURRENDERED THE *THRONE.*

1940! As the world teetered on the brink of global war, frail Steve Rogers entered a secret laboratory and was transformed into the American Super-Soldier! For five thrilling years, he fought the Axis powers--until a freak stroke of fate threw him into suspended animation. When he awoke, he was a man decades out of his time! Since that fateful day, Steve Rogers has sought his destiny in this brave new world!

CAPTAIN AMERICA

Captain America defeated a villainous group called Rampart in Nebraska, and in retaliation, they captured Steve and put him on ice--literally! Now Captain America is, once again, a man out of time in the not-so-distant future of 2025, where Rampart was able to stage a nuclear disaster and use the ensuing panic to usurp America's government. Captain America and his small band of rebels were able to defeat Rampart's King Babbington and reclaim the USA-- but what comes next?

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SPECIAL THANKS TO JOHN ROGERS FOR THE FIVE MAGIC WORDS
CAPTAIN AMERICA CREATED BY JOE SIMON & JACK KIRBY

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NEW AMERICA.
DAY 80.

HOLD THE LINE, MEN!

HOLD THE LINE!

SHAPIRO'S ENTIRE SQUAD IS DOWN, CAP! WHAT DO WE DO?

CUT THE DISTANCE! DRIVE THE ENEMY TO THE EAST--THEY'LL BE PINNED!

GO!

BKOOM!

WE DID IT, CAP! WE BEAT 'EM BACK!

RADIO SAYS THE REST OF THEIR FLEET NEVER EVEN MADE IT UP CHESAPEAKE BAY!

RUSSIANS'LL THINK TWICE ABOUT COMIN' AT US AGAIN!

YOU.

YOU THINK AMERICA WILL JUST LIE DOWN FOR FOREIGN INVADERS NOW THAT KING BABBINGTON IS GONE?

THIS COUNTRY IS UNDER MY PROTECTION, AND IT WILL STAY FREE!

PRISONER OF WAR. TREAT HIM WITH DIGNITY UNTIL WE CAN SHIP HIM BACK HOME TO DELIVER A MESSAGE:

WE'RE STRONGER NOW THAN EVER.

LT. SUNG, ANY WORD FROM THE WEST?

NOTHING GOOD, CAPTAIN. I'VE GOT MASTER SGT. GRIMM ON THE HORN FOR YOU.

CAP? WE AIN'T DOIN' WELL!

THE LATVERIANS AIN'T BUDGIN' OUTTA SAN DIEGO! WE NEED REINFORCEMENTS!

BEN, I DON'T HAVE--

ALL RIGHT, BEN. BUY ME SOME TIME.

"I'LL THINK OF SOMETHING."

EVERY NATION ON EARTH WANTS TO FILL AMERICA'S POWER VACUUM IN THE WAKE OF BABBINGTON'S FALL.

ENTIRE ARMIES ARE COMING AT US BECAUSE I WILL NOT HONOR HIS BACK-CHANNEL DEALS WITH TYRANTS. NOT WHILE OUR OWN INFRASTRUCTURE IS IN SHAMBLES.

THE AGRICULTURAL BELT IS FAILING, BUT I CAN'T SEND SOLDIERS INTO BATTLE ON EMPTY STOMACHS.

THEY NEED ARTILLERY, BUT BANNER CAN BUILD ONLY SO MUCH WITH THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE.

I KNOW HOW TO LEAD THE MILITARY. WHAT I DON'T KNOW IS HOW TO GROW FOOD OR MINE FUEL.

I DIDN'T TAKE THIS JOB. THE PEOPLE GAVE IT TO ME. AND I'M LETTING THEM DOWN.

NOT FOR MUCH LONGER.

LIANG?

CALM DOWN, BOMB POP. THIS ISN'T A *COUP.*

IT'S A ***BEST BET.*** DR. BANNER, YOU WANT TO EXPLAIN?

GRIMM SALVAGED A ***DEVICE*** FOR ME-- THE HEART OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S OLD ***TIME MACHINE.***

IT'S HELD TOGETHER BY PRAYER AND DUCT TAPE, BUT I THINK I CAN GET ***ONE CHARGE*** OUT OF IT.

WE CAN SEND YOU ***HOME,*** CAP.

"BABBINGTON GAVE UP ***KEY INTEL.*** WE KNOW THE ***WHERE*** AND THE ***WHEN*** OF THE ***FIRST*** MISSILE LAUNCH THAT LED TO RAMPART'S CONQUEST.

"IT CAME FROM THE SUB THAT ***CAPTURED*** YOU THE ***MOMENT*** YOU WERE SECURED.

"YOU CAN RETURN TO THE ***PAST*** AND HAVE A SHOT AT STOPPING RAMPART FROM ACTING IN THE ***FIRST*** PLACE."

NO.

...

WHAT?

THIS IS MY **HOME** NOW. BRUCE, CORRECT ME IF I'M WRONG, BUT WE DON'T KNOW FOR **SURE** THE FULL RAMIFICATIONS OF TIME TRAVEL. CAN YOU **GUARANTEE** THIS WILL WORK?

WELL, NO, BUT--

WHAT IF ALL THAT DOES IS CREATE AN ALTERNATE TIMELINE? HOW WOULD THAT FIX THE **HERE** AND **NOW?**

OR WHAT IF I GO BACK AND SOMEHOW **FAIL?** THAT TAKES ME OFF THE BOARD **ALTOGETHER,** AND THEN HOW MANY **MORE** OF US **DIE?**

CAN'T IT BE **YOU?** OR **BEN?**

NEITHER OF **US** HAVE THE **JUICE** ANYMORE. YOU'RE OUR **BEST CHANCE.**

THEN **NO.** YOUR REALITY IS **THEORETICAL.** MINE IS **CONCRETE.** REAL LIVES VERSUS **HYPOTHETICALS.** I APPRECIATE WHAT YOU'RE SAYING, BUT I...

...I CAN'T ABANDON THIS **FIGHT.** I PROMISED TO MAKE THIS **RIGHT,** AND I **CAN.**

I TOOK AN OATH TO DEFEND MY COUNTRY NO MATTER THE COST. WE **HAVE** TO REBUILD THE **REPUBLIC,** AND IF THAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN--

TN
NC
AR
MS
AL
GA
LA
X

DAY 102.

"--EVERYONE HAS A ROLE TO PLAY."

DAY 152.

DAY 179.

DAY 223.

DAY 279.

DAY 291.

--DON'T KNOW THAT WE CAN RECLAIM THE NORTHWEST AT ALL AT THIS POINT.

CENSUS SHOWS ABOUT 15 MILLION BUT STILL SHRINKING. THE WATER SHORTAGE--

DAY 311.

--FOOD RIOTS IN CALIFORNIA--

THEY'LL LISTEN TO YOU, SIR. THEY NEED MORE FROM YOU.

YOU'RE SPREADING YOURSELF SO VERY THIN, BOMB POP. WHEN YOU PRIORITIZE, STOP PUTTING EVERY PROBLEM AT THE TOP.

I WILL.

PLEASE.

NEW AMERICA.
DAY 349.

THAT THE *LAST* OF THEM?

YES, SIR! ANYBODY ANYWHERE IN *EUROPE* WANTED A PIECE OF *PHILADELPHIA*. THEY AIN'T ANYTHING TO WORRY ABOUT NO MORE! WE *WON!*

GOOD WORK. LET'S KEEP *MOVING*. VICTORY IS *AT HAND.*

CAPTAIN ROGERS, I HAVE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES ON THE LINE, SAYS IT'S URGENT!

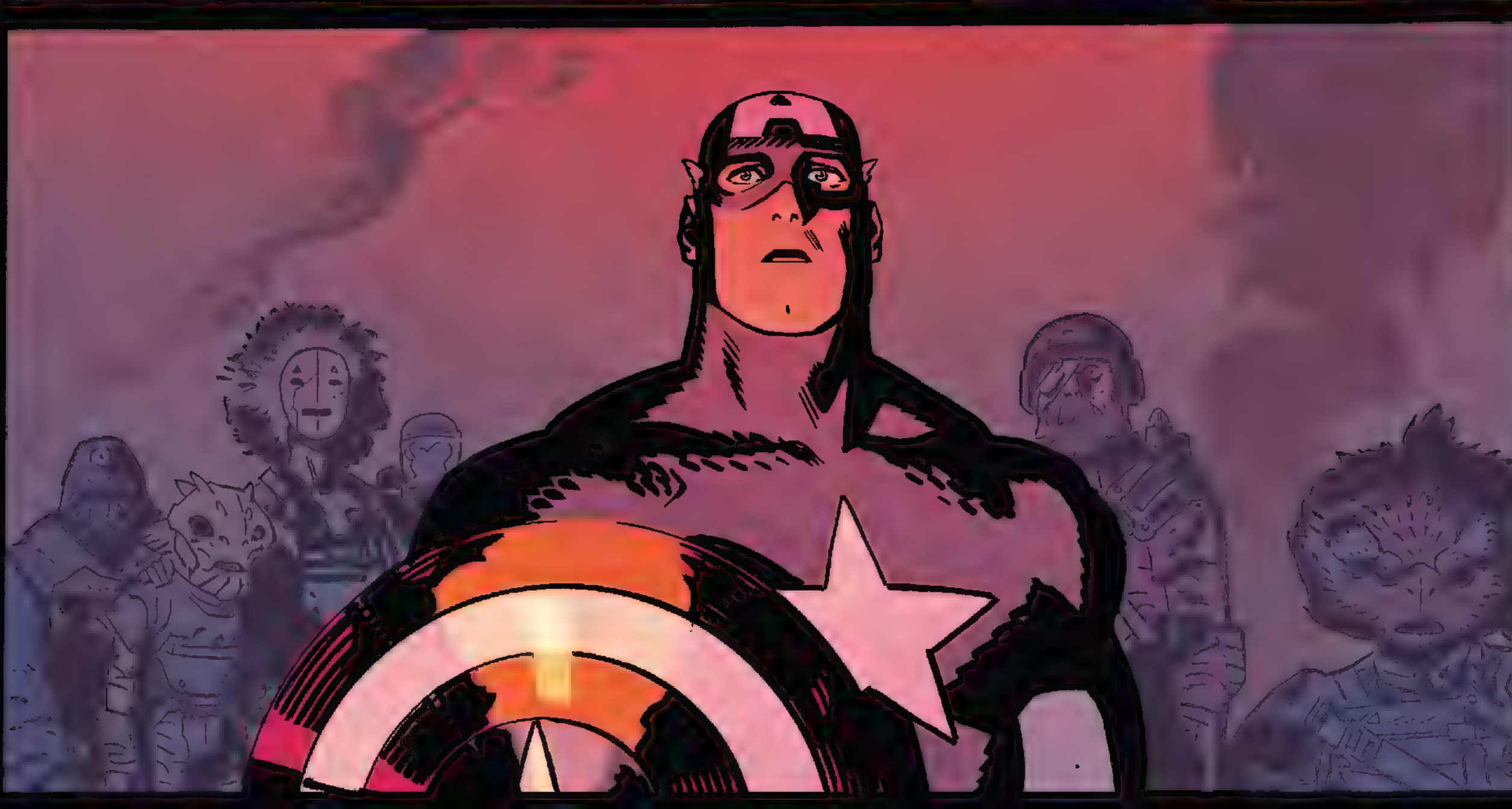
NOT RIGHT NOW, SOLDIER! WE'VE GOT GROUND TO MAKE UP, *FAST.* WHO'S GOT WORD FROM THE *FLORIDA KEYS?*

THEY'RE REPORTING A LOSS OF A *FIGHTER WING!*

THAT'S *ONE CRAFT!* THE UNDERGROUND SAYS IT'S DETECTING A GIANT *CACHE* OF *VIBRANIUM RIFLES!*

CAPTAIN, WE'VE STILL GOT AN S.O.S. COMING IN FROM *NEW YORK!* THEY NEED AN *ANSWER!*

AND THEY'LL GET IT! FOR GOD'S SAKE, ONE *PROBLEM* AT A--



NEW YORK. WE HEARD.

YOU WERE RIGHT.

ABOUT...?

ABOUT MY BEING OVER-CONFIDENT.

THAT'S NOT QUITE HOW WE *PUT* IT. STEVE, IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT YOU CAME INTO THIS CONFLICT SO LATE. WE WERE ALMOST *DONE* BEFORE YOU EVEN SHOWED *UP*. WHAT COULD YOU REALLY--

I COULD *THINK*, NOT JUST *ACT*.

I'VE BEEN ORDERING MY MEN NOT TO WASTE ENERGY DYING ON EVERY HILL, BUT THAT'S THE *PROBLEM*--

--I DON'T KNOW HOW TO *STOP*. I NEVER *DID*. SO WE'RE WINNING *BATTLES*, BUT WE'RE LOSING THE *WAR*.

SEND ME BACK.

...YOU'RE SURE?

HOPE IS NOT A *PLAN*.

THAT'S THE LEAST CAPTAIN AMERICA THING I'VE EVER HEARD.

WE'RE OUTGUNNED ON EVERY FRONT, AND I'M OUT OF MIRACLES. IT'S THAT SIMPLE.

AT THIS STAGE, IT'S EITHER GIVE UP OR ACCEPT BANNER'S HAIL MARY.

AND YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO GIVE UP.

AND I DON'T KNOW HOW TO GIVE UP.

ALL RIGHT, THEN.

WHEN WILL THIS LAND ME?

IDEALLY, ABOUT A WEEK BEFORE RAMPART INITIALLY FROZE YOU. BEST I COULD DO, AND THAT'S GUESSING.

BUT THAT SHOULD GIVE YOU TIME TO TRACK DOWN THEIR SUB, MAKE A PLAN AND TAKE THEM *OUT*.

I'M READY WHEN YOU ARE.

GOODBYE, STEVE.

"STEVE."

JUST DO ONE THING FOR ME.

NAME IT.

LOOK ME UP SOMETIME.

NO!

STOP! NOT THIS!

NOT--

"IDEALLY, ABOUT A WEEK." YOU DID SAY YOU WERE GUESSING, BRUCE.

I JUST WISH YOU'D BEEN SMARTER.

10:00

CARGO SECURED! OPEN THE BAY DOORS AND TELL BABBINGTON WE HAVE CAPTAIN AMERICA!

YEAH?

09:25

THEN WHO'S THAT?

09:05

GENERALS! BE *READY!* ALL OF YOU SHOULD BE IN *WASHINGTON* BY NOW!

TAKE TO YOUR *SHELTERS!* WE'RE ABOUT TO BEGIN A *NEW ERA* OF *AMERICAN EXCELLENCE!*

A *NEW SOCIETY* DEDICATED TO THE GOD-GIVEN POWER OF *INDIVIDUALISM*--WHERE THE *STRONG* STAND *INDEPENDENT* OF THE *WEAK!*

TO GLORY!

SIR! SOMETHING'S GONE *WRONG!*

WE WERE SURE WE *HAD* HIM, BUT--

--BUT WE'RE *UNDER ATTACK!*

08:15

07:20

06:10

CATCH

05:35

LOCK EVERYTHING DOWN! NOW!

TELL EVERYONE WE ARE GO FOR LAUNCH!

03:35

YOU OUGHT TO *THANK* ME, BABBINGTON.

WHATEVER "*FALLOUT-FREE RADIATION*" YOUR MEN THINK THEY'VE COOKED UP, IT DOES MORE THAN YOU *THINK*.

YES, AT EXTREMELY CLOSE RANGE, IT *ATOMIZES*. BUT AS IT *SPREADS*, IT *TRANSFORMS* PEOPLE. TURNS SOME OF THEM INTO GROTESQUE *MONSTERS*.

I'VE *SEEN* WHAT IT WOULD HAVE DONE TO *YOU*, BABBINGTON.

IT WOULD HAVE MADE YOU EVEN *UGLIER*.

FSHANG

ZSH!

NNGHH!

03:30

VVVVT VVVVT VVVVT

LAUNCH ENGAGED.

WELL... THAT WORKED OUT NICELY, DIDN'T IT?

MEN, BACK TO THE *PLAN*. PUT THIS FOOL ON *ICE* TO *PRESERVE* HIM. I'D PLANNED FOR HIM TO BE AN IMAGE OF *"GREATNESS"* TO THE NEW AMERICAN *SHEEP*.

NOW HE'LL BE A SYMBOL OF *DEFEAT*.

NO!

02:20

FRASH!!

SPLUNG

01:15

I DON'T KNOW HOW TO STOP.

01:00

I NEVER DID.

00:45

HOPE IS NOT A *PLAN.*

00:15

00:10

00:05

00:02

BUT YOU SURE AS HELL CAN'T WIN *WITHOUT* IT.

KABLAM

KAK

HHHUUUHHH!

Dear Sharon:

Sorry I've not been in touch. Lost the phone a couple of weeks ago during a fight with Kraven the Hunter. Long story.

Seemed for a moment like I was captured and put on ice by Rampart, but in that moment, something catastrophic happened to their floating headquarters. Don't know what.

Salvaged enough intel from the wreckage to track down a number of Rampart cells--all of them, I think, but if not, certainly enough to nullify their threat.

Saw more of the country along the way. Purple mountains, amber grains, the whole song.

You won't admit that you know the lyrics, but you do.

That night in Richmond, after the fight with Madame Hydra.

You were humming it in the shower when you didn't think I could hear you.

I know Tony's slipping money into my checking account. Tell him thanks, and that he'll get it back at our next poker night.

He always does.

I still haven't found a place to settle down, but I'm in no rush. I'll keep you posted. Until then...

...know that whenever you need me, I'll be there.

Love, Steve

WAID
SAMNEE
WILSON
CARAMAGNA

The GAUNTLET!

THERE'S NO WAY THAT WE COULD CELEBRATE THE STAR-SPANGLED AVENGER'S 700TH SPECTACULAR ISSUE WITHOUT A CONTRIBUTION FROM HIS CO-CREATOR AND VISUAL STYLIST JACK "KING" KIRBY! SO MARK WAID CULLED THROUGH THE ARCHIVES TO CRAFT THIS THRILLING UNTOLD TALE! ENJOY!

"THE *FIRST* PHALANX OPENED FIRE THE MOMENT I SET FOOT OUTSIDE *TONY STARK'S LAB.*

10 PULSE-POUNDING PAGES!

WHOK!

CRAK!

STORY BY
MARK WAID
BASED ON MATERIAL BY
STAN LEE & JACK KIRBY

CAPTAIN AMERICA CREATED BY JOE SIMON & JACK KIRBY

CLASSIC ARTWORK BY
JACK KIRBY & FRANK GIACOIA

COLORS BY
MATTHEW WILSON

LETTERS BY
FERRAN DELGADO with ARTIE SIMEK & SAM ROSEN

CLEANUP BY
MICHAEL KELLEHER

"NORMALLY, I WOULD HAVE FOUGHT WITH A LITTLE MORE *FINESSE*, BUT...*CIRCUMSTANCES.*

WR-AM!

ONE OF YOU MUST HAVE RADIO CONTACT WITH YOUR *BOSS.*

RINK

GIVE HIM A *MESSAGE.*

SPLAM

KRASH

TELL THE *RED SKULL* THAT IF HE THINKS HE CAN KEEP ME FROM GETTING TO *S.H.I.E.L.D.* IN TIME--

POW

--HE'LL NEED A BETTER *DEFENSIVE LINE* THAN *THIS!*

CAP! WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

PUT OUT AN APB ON THESE MEN SO YOU CAN ROUND THEM UP--FOR THEIR SAKE! ONCE THE SKULL LEARNS THEY FAILED, THEIR LIVES WON'T BE WORTH A NICKEL!

THERE'S NO NEGOTIATING MANHATTAN TRAFFIC EVEN IN A POLICE CAR THIS TIME OF DAY! BEST BET'S FOR ME TO MAKE A STRAIGHT RUN!

HAVE THE NYPD CLEAR A PATH FOR ME TO 57TH AND LEX!

"HUNDREDS OF LIVES ARE ON THE LINE!"

S.H.I.E.L.D. CLEARANCE ALPHA-ONE, DOCTOR COTTEN. HOW'S THE "PATIENT"?

DECAYING QUICKLY, I'M AFRAID.

DECAYING? I WAS TOLD ONLY THAT WE HAVE AN AGENT IN A COMA--

HERE'S WHAT I CAN TELL YOU. LET'S JUST SAY THAT THE RED SKULL'S SCIENTISTS HAVE...INFECTED ONE AGENT WITH A...

...A SORT OF DISEASE THAT'S ALREADY SPREAD UNCHECKED--

--AND IF CAPTAIN AMERICA DOESN'T GET TONY STARK'S "CURE" TO US WITHIN THE HOUR, DOZENS AND DOZENS OF OTHERS WILL DROP DEAD AS ONE!

"I KNEW THE CLOCK WAS TICKING. I RUSHED TOWARD THE LAB FULL-THROTTLE. WHAT I DIDN'T KNOW--

SHOOM!

"--WAS HOW MANY MORE *BARRICADES* THE SKULL HAD SET FOR ME.

"*CENTRAL PARK* BECAME A *BATTLE ZONE.*

ZAP!

HEY, *STARS-AND-STRIPES!* HERE'S A *TIP!* YOU DON'T WANNA BE *GUNNED* AT--

--MAYBE DON'T CARRY A GIANT *BULL'S-EYE!*

BRAK

"THE ORDNANCE SEEMED ODDLY FAMILIAR. THEN IT HIT ME WHERE I'D LAST *SEEN* IT--

"ON A *DISPOSAL ROCKET* SET FOR THE *SUN.*"

KAPPP!

YOU *IDIOT!* THAT GUN'S *UNSTABLE!*

DROP IT!

SKULL *STOLE* IT FROM S.H.I.E.L.D.--

--AND HE EITHER DOESN'T *KNOW* OR DOESN'T *CARE* WHAT HAPPENS *NEXT!*

I SAID--

--DROP IT!!

CLANG!

I--

--I GOT MY FINGER OFF TH' *TRIGGER*-- BUT IT'S STILL *BLASTIN'*!

THAT'S BECAUSE SKULL SET YOU *UP*! YOU'RE NOT A *GUNNER*--

--YOU'RE A *HUMAN BOMB*!

DROP THE WEAPON!

YOU'RE *LYIN'*!

I'M NOT GOING TO *ARGUE*! I'M *OUT OF RANGE*, YOU FOOL--

--*BUT YOU'RE NOT!*

"THAT'S THE THING ABOUT THE SKULL. 'LOYALTY' IS *FOREIGN* TO HIM.

"HE'LL SACRIFICE *ANYONE* TO FUEL HIS SICK AGENDAS.

HERR SKULL, WE HAVE DRONE FOOTAGE OF CENTRAL PARK.

I'M AFRAID THE CAPTAIN REMAINS ON THE MOVE.

I SAID--

SILENCE!

GIVE ME A MOMENT OR CHOOSE YOUR COFFIN!

I CANNOT ALLOW HIM *PASSAGE.* THERE IS SIMPLY TOO MUCH THAT CAN BE *ACCOMPLISHED* SHOULD DIRECTOR *NICHOLAS FURY* AND HIS OFFICIOUS *SPY ORGANIZATION* BE DECIMATED.

THE CAPTAIN IS HEADED FOR THE S.H.I.E.L.D. BUILDING ON 57TH. I KNOW IT *WELL*--

WELL ENOUGH TO HAVE PLANTED MY *OWN MEN* INSIDE--BUT THEY WILL NOT BE *ENOUGH* TO *TAME* HIM.

I HAVE UNDERESTIMATED THE CAPTAIN FOR THE LAST TIME. HE RESPECTS ONLY *STRENGTH?* ONLY *COMBAT?* VERY WELL.

SEND THE BRAWLER!

"INSIDE THE BUILDING, I KNEW BETTER THAN TO RELAX. THE SKULL HADN'T *WON* YET--

"--AND *RELENTLESSNESS* IS HIS POINT OF *PRIDE.*

FIRE!

DON'T TELL ME YOU LIGHTWEIGHTS ARE THE SKULL'S *A-TEAM!*

BRAK!

SKLAK!

MERELY AN ADVANCE SQUAD.

BYONG!

BATROC--?

UNGHH!

MY POOR *CAPITAINE*. I AM FRESH AND ENERGIZED FOR *BATTLE. YOU,* HOWEVER...

BLAMM!

"I ADMIT, THAT CAUGHT ME OFF-GUARD. THE MERCENARY WAS A GOOD PLAY BY THE SKULL.

"NORMALLY, BATROC IS AN *EASY WIN,* BUT THAT MAD SCRAMBLE CROSSTOWN *HAD* TAKEN A BIT OUT OF ME. STILL, ALL THAT MEANT--

"--WAS THAT I'D HAVE TO USE BATROC'S ENERGY *AGAINST* HIM.

ADIEU, MON CAPITAINE.

THA--

WHA--?!

SAVATE'S NOT MY *THING,* BATROC.

I PREFER *JUDO.*

THWIS-S-S-T!

"I ALSO PREFERRED A SECOND WIND, BUT I WASN'T SURE WHERE IT WOULD COME FROM.

A *COWARD'S* WAY! THEN AGAIN, WHAT ELSE CAN I *EXPECT* FROM AN *AMERICAN?*

"PROBLEM SOLVED.

SOK!

YOU ARROGANT ASS!

NOBODY--

--BUT NOBODY--

--TALKS--

--ABOUT--

--US--

--LIKE THAT!

EVER!

"I LET THE GUARDS TAKE IT FROM THERE WHILE I MADE THE HANDOFF.

"MY QUESTION FOR *YOU*, NICK, IS--

--WHAT PRECISELY DID I *DELIVER?*

SALVATION AND *SAFETY.* YOU SAVED A BUNCHA SYNTHETIC *LMDs*--"LIFE-MODEL DECOYS"--DEPLOYED IN HIGH-RISK MISSIONS TO MINIMIZE AGENT *CASUALTIES.*

MODEL...*WHAT...?* MACHINES? I THOUGHT THIS WAS *LIFE AND DEATH*--

YOU THOUGHT *RIGHT.* IF THE LMDs WERE *WIPED,* *HUNDREDS* OF AGENTS WOULDA SUDDENLY BEEN ALONE AND VULNERABLE IN THE *FIELD.*

THE LMDs SHARED A WORLDWIDE COMMUNICATION NET--BUT IT *BACKFIRED* ON US WHEN THE SKULL PUMPED A *"NEURAL CANCER"* INTO THE SYSTEM.

THIS IS THE *FIX* YOU WERE CARRYIN'.

HOW *BIZARRE.*

WHY? 'CAUSE IT LOOKS LIKE A LITTLE *BRAIN?*

STARK, THE *SHOWMAN.* WHADDAYA GONNA DO.

THE TECHS WERE ABLE TO USE THIS GIZMO TO *PURGE* THE NET OF SKULL'S *GARBAGE CODE.*

"LIFE-MODEL DECOYS."

GOT ONE *MYSELF.* MAYBE A *COUPLE.* NEVER CAN TELL WHEN I'M IN *HYDRA*'S CROSSHAIRS.

I HESITATE TO ASK, THEN, BECAUSE THE ANSWER COULD BE DISTURBING, BUT--

--IS THERE ONE OF *ME?*

DON'T I *WISH.*

I'LL BE HONEST, ROGERS. OUR BOYS'VE BEEN *TRYIN'* TO MAKE THAT HAPPEN, BUT WE'RE NOT *THAT* GOOD YET.

IT'S LIKE I ALWAYS TELL YA, SOLJER--

"--CAPTAIN AMERICA IS ONE OF A KIND."

END

CAP'S CORNER

WHAT DOES CAPTAIN AMERICA MEAN TO YOU?

There is a quote that comes to mind by comic book legend Jim Steranko: "He was the American truth. The face behind the mask was ours."

I remember my first time seeing Captain America. I was about four or five and I was pilfering through my brother's stuff down in the basement when I found a coffee mug with an iconic Cap-fighting-Red-Skull scene on it. I remember asking my brother about this character solely because my young mind was amazed by this guy in red, white and blue punching this mean-looking monster in the face. This would be my introduction to a character who would be my favorite super hero for the rest of my life.

Initially, it was because both my brother and my dad named him as their favorite super hero--I mean, if they thought he was so amazing, that's all the proof a five-year-old kid needs to think so as well. However, I can remember the first moment I became a real Captain America fan. I was in high school when Steve Rogers died in CIVIL WAR. Curious to see what had gone down, I went back and read the entire arc. One moment in the book validated what a five-year-old kid couldn't comprehend, but understood: That Captain America was the best. Spider-Man had just switched sides, and he asked how Cap could be so sure in his cause when the whole world told him he was wrong.

"Doesn't matter what the press says. Doesn't matter what the politicians or the mob say. Doesn't matter if the country decides something wrong is something right. This nation was founded on one principle above all: the requirement that we stand up for what we believe in, no matter the odds or consequences. When the mob and the press and the whole world tells you to move, your job is to plant yourself firm like a tree beside the river of truth and tell the whole world: No, you move!"

Steve Rogers is the American truth--we may have different opinions, see things differently. Some of us are right, some of us are wrong, but our conviction in what we believe holds true to that very notion Cap spoke of. Captain America is my favorite character. I have stood by him as the title has been passed around, I have stood by him when they used him to show the fracture and divide currently present in our nation by having him betray the very ideals he was founded upon. I have watched him return to form in this amazing series. Keep the truth of this country going. The legacy of the sentinel of liberty needs to live on.

Michael Oden

"The Strong protect the Weak. That's the rule."

That, to me, is what Captain America is all about. Cap's use of a shield, a tool primarily designed for defense, is a powerful symbol, reminding us of the character's core beliefs. Steve Rogers was a hero before he was even given the super-serum. Even as a smaller, weaker person, he wanted nothing more than a chance to help fight those who would oppress and hurt the innocent. He was taking punches and doing the right thing before the enhanced physique, shield and costume.

Captain America is an avatar for the person who had always been within Rogers. He is the core of the man, personified in a larger-than-life hero. Captain America believes in humanity, and in so doing, helps us believe in ourselves. He shows us through words and actions that we CAN be better, that we should fight the good fight and stand up for what is right and true.

But there is also a vulnerability to the man to which we can all relate--the feeling of sometimes being overwhelmed by how things and people seemingly keep changing around us, the sentiment that we're out of touch, missing old friends and simpler times. But through it all, Rogers never gives up and never backs down. And neither should we, those who would protect the weak.

Long live Captain America.

Etienne L.
Quebec, Canada

Dear CAPTAIN AMERICA Team,

Captain America will always mean far more to me than I can put into words. I'm so blessed to come from a loving family that has generations of men and women dedicated to bravery

and putting others first. Both of my grandpas served in the Army, as well as an amazing uncle and three of my brothers. I also have an uncle and a brother who are firefighters. My grandma actually escaped her home country of Austria during WWII and had an amazing story of her escape from the Nazis. Upon arriving in America and marrying my grandpa, she actually read Captain America comics as part of her way to learn the English language. Grandpa would also give her money, drop her off at the theater on his way to work and she'd watch movies to learn the language.

This is just a glimpse of the amazing family I get to be a part of. Captain America to me is a representation of selfless acts, bravery and doing what's right even when you're the only one willing to do it. And I see it in my family every day. Captain America is my grandpas. Captain America is my grandma. Captain America is my uncles. And Captain America is my brothers.

Please take care of Cap. His legacy and integrity clearly means so much to me and many others. And I can't imagine a better creative team to do the job. Dating back to their Daredevil run, I liked to imagine a Waid/Samnee/Wilson Cap book and I'm so happy to have it!

Attached is a picture of me and CAPTAIN AMERICA #1 at the Nebraska/Kansas state line that I thought y'all might enjoy seeing.

Thank you so much for such a great first issue, and I look forward to many more!

Nick Sutphin

Hi Mark,

I've been enjoying your work for years and was gobsmacked when I read your afterword in CAP #695. You and I worked at WVCW at the same time. I doubt you remember me--I went by "Mr. Randy" on-air. If you remember me at all, I'm sure it was how annoying and obnoxious I was. Then again, I have a theory that people who are annoying and obnoxious in middle-age didn't get it out of their system early enough, so I've got that going for me.

What does Cap mean to me? That character has always been a source of motivation and inspiration. More than once while serving in the Marine Corps, I wished I had Super-Soldier serum running through my veins! His unwavering enthusiasm and almost childlike optimism combined with the confidence of a highly experienced combat veteran has always been a reminder of a time in our hearts, if not in history, when things were simpler. The good guys always won and the bad guys were all Nazis.

Congratulations on living your dream, and thank you for your part in keeping a classic character alive for all of us!

All the best,
Randy Cook

I'm 44 years old now and Cap means "heart" to me. My first time seeing Cap was in reruns of the 1966 cartoon.

My grandfather and I would watch these together. He also bought me my first comic books of Cap. My grandfather was the greatest person I've ever known. He was a WWII veteran that served in the army and volunteered for Merrill's Marauders. He was and still is my hero, and Cap reminds me of him.

I give full credit to my grandfather for my nerd life, comic addiction and love for this great country. I give Jack and Joe thanks for creating Steve Rogers. My grandfather, Victor Bowles, passed away years ago, but Steve Rogers lives on. That makes my heart feel good, to read a Captain America comic and remember my grandfather.

Stuart D.

Cap is a symbol of hope, of all that we can aspire to. And we don't need muscles or a Super-Soldier serum to be all we can be. Hope gives us strength, the will to go on fighting. To speak up when something you don't like happens.

I THINK that was the lesson SECRET EMPIRE was trying to teach us: to stand up, to speak out. We don't need Captain America to do that for us. That's not why he exists. He encourages each and every one of us to stand up and speak loudly: "No. That's enough."

And for me, that's enough.

Jason Jackson

My father--Irving "Doc" Lebow--was Captain America to me.

The child of Eastern European immigrants [like Stan Lee], my father came of age at the end of the Depression. And like Jack Kirby, my father was handed a gun and a chocolate bar by the Army Air Corps [in 1941] and was told "go save the world."

My father was away from my mother, fighting in the Pacific Theater, for four years. When my dad returned from the war, he sold used cars on the same street corner in Miami for forty years. He and my mother produced four children: a teacher,

judge, an entertainer and me--a Rabbi.

My father made sure that all four of us got a college education and that we were sent on our way in life. He and my mother were married for 60 years, until he passed away recently.

Doc Lebow will always be the greatest man I ever knew. I still carry his old WWII dog tags to remind me that my old man was the original Captain America.

Rabbi Steven Lebow
Senior Rabbi
Temple Kol Emeth
Marietta, GA

My name is Jake Batina and Captain America is one of my favorite Marvel heroes. I have a small case of autism [Asperger's] and growing up with it was kinda rough. And for a while, it seemed like I wouldn't live a normal life. And it was around that time that *Captain America: The First Avenger* came out in theaters. That was my first real exposure to Captain America. I loved it as a kid and still love it now. It's one of my favorite movies ever. A year later, I would get into comic books and I would always read **CAPTAIN AMERICA** and **IRON MAN** because those are my favorites. Through the years, reading **CAPTAIN AMERICA**, well, kinda helped me with my autism and made realize I could overcome it, like how Cap had overcome his own personal problems. I loved how he was just a person who wanted nothing but to do the right thing, no matter who told him no. I loved how he was the hero that everyone could turn to; how he's still just a man compared to those around him.

He's been a big part of my life during my preteen years to my teen years. He's always been a big part of my life--I always carry a Lego Captain America figure in my pocket, and recently my mother got me a Captain America keychain to put on my car keys for my birthday. Once, my high school took a trip to Disneyland and I bought a ton of Captain America stuff, including a Captain America shield. I have so much Captain America stuff it's not even funny. Even one of my old Facebook profile pictures is me in a Captain America tank top. He's just one of my favorite [if not my favorite] Marvel heroes.

Jake Batina

Captain America is, and always will be, my favorite super hero. The reason for this is simple: His high morals and bravery are what sets him apart from the rest.

Steve Rogers is a man who can never by corrupted. That's why it didn't surprise me that it was an impostor in the **SECRET EMPIRE** story arc. He will always do what is right, no matter what. Captain America has inspired me greatly. He always stands up for everybody, and I aspire to do the same.

Steve Rogers is also incredibly brave. No matter what the odds are against him, he fights for what is right.

I first got into Captain America when I saw the first Avengers movie. I was quite young at the time [I still am]. I was hooked the moment I saw him put his red-white-and-blue uniform on. I then went back and watched his first movie [I have seen every Marvel film in the theaters after that]. This further amazed me. My favorite movie of all time is *Captain America: Civil War*. It, to me, displayed the full extent of his ethics.

I was hooked on the comics shortly later. I read the **CAPTAIN AMERICA: WINTER SOLDIER** collection. I also read **CAPTAIN AMERICA: WAR AND REMEMBERANCE** and **CAPTAIN AMERICA: LOOSE NUKE**. These were my favorites. I have recently subscribed to get **CAPTAIN AMERICA** and **DAREDEVIL** comics each week.

Issue **#695** has to be my favorite comic issue of all time. I want to be a civil rights lawyer when I grow up [Cap helped inspire me to do that as well]. Seeing him defend the innocent against white supremacists is what I live for.

In short, Captain America is the best because he shows the best of humanity. He is what everybody should aspire to be.

Owen Smith
15 years old

NEXT:

CAPTAIN AMERICA #701

In the world of tomorrow, desperate to save his child, state historian Jack Rogers looks to the past of his ancestor, Captain America, for guidance. Featuring new ongoing artist Leonardo Romero and guest artists Adam Hughes and J.G. Jones!

PROMISED LAND

What does Cap mean to you? Send us emails at **MHEROES@MARVEL.COM** and mark them **"Okay to Print,"** or tweet us using the hashtags **#CapLegacy** and **#OKtoprint** for a chance to see your marvelous missives in future issues!

ZONE